Ponderous British Hat Boxes, Portmanteaus and Hold Alls—The Baggage on a Steamship Wharf Is a Study—The Traveler and His Bathtub.

As the traveling Briton is known in this country by his luggage, so the American woman was once hated in Europe because of her saratoga trunk. The world has escaped the general adoption of the saratoga trunk, but a worse thing seems possible, as British luggage threatens to become international. Even now you may buy in this town all the impedimenta with which the traveling Briton cumbers himself and bedevils the rest of mankind. A Broadway trunkmaker has for some years past undertaken to fix the thraldom of these things upon his fellow country men and women, and many traveling Americans, especially the wealthy and fashionable, are to be recognised by the multiplicity of British impedimenta that they carry to and fro in their frequent journeyings between the old world and the new. More curious still, those clever and imitative Japanese have begun to produce British luggage identical with the original in the minutest details, even down to hand sewed straps on leather trunks, portmanteaus and the like; but, drolly enough, the whole outfit is merely a paper counterfeit of the real thing.

American imitators of things British, lacking the fine humor of the Japanese, have made no substitution of light material for heavy, but have taken on the full burden of ponderous British hatboxes, portmanteaus, rugs, bags, hold alls and even bathtubs. It was a traveling American who gave to the world an account of a refreshing scene on board a Mediterranean steamer bound to Tangier or some such Mohammedan port of north Africa. A British passenger with his bathtub had nearly pestered the life out of a meek, coffee colored Mohammedan, who accepted the Briton's curses without a sign of reproach, but when in the course of getting the luggage ashore the precious bathtub fell overboard and sank like lead, the harmless follower of the prophet was seen to pause in his work and dance gleefully upon the deck, exclaiming in triumph, "Oh, Mr. Goddam, Mr. Goddam!" It is since that incident that traveled Americans in their aping of British ways have accepted even the burden of the bathtub.

A study of baggage at a steamship wharf or even at a large railway station in New York is an instructive lesson as to the cosmopolitan character of the city. There is one article of British luggage that seldom survives more than one journey within the limits of the United States and sometimes gets no farther inland than the New York hotel at which the traveler makes his first stop. This article is the little trunk or box of japanned tin much used by travelers in Great Britain. The flimsy trifle hardly survives the first encounter with the American baggage handler, and after the first journey of 600 miles in this country is battered out of all resemblance to its original rectilinear self. It is an article of luggage not suitable to the exigencies of American travel.

A pathetic feature of the baggage at the railway stations that are doorways to the west is the immigrant's luggage. Sometimes it is a mattress from the steerage wrapped about the few belongings of the new made American. Again it is the corded box of the Irish, English or Scotch immigrant. It will be recalled how important a preliminary to Charlotte Bronte's journeyings out into the great world from her Yorkshire home was the cording of her box. The corded box is as rare among the luggage of an American traveler as the old hair trunk, though both are occasionally seen. The seaman's locker, rectilinear for a stable stowage and strong against accidents, figures in the luggage at steamship wharves. One knows instinctively its contents of old clothes, protographs, curios, tobacco and long treasured letters from home and the array of pictures from the illustrated papers pasted on the inside of the lid.

The elaborate dressing cases that some Americans and all well to do Englishmen used to travel with are going out of fashion. It is almost a necessity that the traveler with this pretty piece of luggage take along a valet, for the thing weighs like so much lead and is too precious to be trusted to the tender mercies of the baggage department. The traveling desk also has nearly disappeared, though some ingenious trunkmakers now produce trunks that open so as to form desks. The luncheon hamper that used to accompany every traveler across this continent in the days before dining cars came into use has almost entirely disappeared. The California millionaires of early transcontinental travel carried enormous and richly laden hampers and dispensed often a princely hospitality to their fellow travelers. The dinner hour on board a transcontinental train was a picturesque incident of travel in those days. The traveling Briton in Europe still sometimes carries his luncheon hamper, and it is often one of the nuisances of European travel.

Some of the English theatrical companies have become so used to traveling in America that they have adopted our methods with baggage. They accept with grace the great American trunk, dispense with the hatbox, the bathtub, the rugs, shawl straps and the rest and calmly see their belongings carted off by a stranger, who leaves behind as evidence only a bit of brass bearing a few letters and numbers.—New York Sun.

The Little Thing That Amused.

A noted man passed up Chestnut street, and everybody smiled when they glanced at him and made laughing remarks to each other.

The reason for their mirth lay in the fact that he carried in full view of everybody—stuck in the front pocket of his overcoat—a legal document bearing the word "Mortgage" in large and conspicuous letters.—Philadelphia Call.

A Painful Dilemma.

Senior Partner—What are you looking so glum over?

Junior Partner—Got a note from my wife that the pug is lost. Now, if I don't sympathize for her a whole lot, she will say I am a cold blooded brute, and if I do sympathize she will suspect that I hired some one to steal the dog and am just condoling with her for a bluff.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

According to oriental tradition the tomb of "Noah, the ark builder," is in the small town of Nakhichevan, near the foot of Mount Ararat. It is said to be a niche in the wall of an abandoned fortress.

One of the Many Important Factors in Murder Cases.

In centuries past the human hair played an important part in all judicial proceedings. Those that were permitted to wear beard and hair had rights that could not be claimed by the shorn and shaved. When men made oath, they touched their beard and hair, and women placed the finger tips of the right hand on their tresses.

Servants were obliged to have their hair cut, and if a freedman went into slavery he had to divest himself of his hirsute adornments. An adult adopted by foster parents was obliged to have his beard shaved and the shaving of beard and hair was a punishment inflicted on criminals. The jurisprudence of our ancestors dealt with punishment "by skin and hair" for small offenses and "by neck and hand" for greater crimes.

There has always been more or less superstition about hair. Great strength was implied by it, and wizards and witches knew of concoctions of hair by which they poisoned enemies. Cats' hair was especially named in the category of poisonous hairs, and even at the beginning of the seventeenth century Paulus Zacchias, a famous physician, writes of the virulent poison of the hair of cats.

Among civilized people such superstitious beliefs have gone out of existence, and only Malays give their enemies tiger hairs in broth to kill them.

Hair today, however, is one of the important factors in deciding murder cases, and the microscopic examination of hair, where it is found in criminal cases under suspicious circumstances, is invariable.

The first thing the coroner is called upon to determine is whether the hair is from man or beast. The microscope determines this beyond peradventure. Animal hair differs in construction from that grown on a human head. In human hair the upper skin is smooth and thin. The circular section is comparatively broad, forming the main part of the hair shaft. It is striped in appearance and carries the color matter. The tubular part is thin, extending to about one-fifth and certainly not more than to one-quarter of the entire width of the hair.

Animal hair also consists of three parts, but these are differently constructed, the tube often filling the entire hair. The ends of the hair must be closely watched, and especially woman's hair will be found ragged and torn at the ends.

The hair from beards is usually the thickest, its diameter being as much as 0.15 millimeters, while hair from female heads can be as fine as a diameter of 0.06 millimeters would make it.

Wood Bending.

In an account of the wood bending industry a writer in The Woodworker remarks that comparatively few persons outside the carriage and boat building interests are aware of its extent, and but few realize that the carriages they ride in are very largely made of such wood—the fellies of all their wheels are bent and made in two parts—the framework of coaches and heavy carriages is nearly all made of bent stock, and not only better made, but more cheaply, and the frames of pleasure boats are bent, as also many of the frames of the finest sailing yachts. Furniture, too, of many kinds, has bent frames, all the celebrated Thonet chairs, for example, being made entirely of wood thus treated. The object of bending is twofold—namely, saving of time and stock and stability and strength of the work when put together—this independent of beauty of form, and bent carriage shafts are almost, if not entirely, used now, instead of the old style, clumsy, sawed ones. Skill in manipulating the material is very essential. Simply the forms to bend on and the steam box in which to soften the wood do not alone insure success in the operation—it is necessary to know perfectly the stock to bend, it being so variable that no two pieces bend alike.

Two Literary Coincidences.

In a recent after dinner speech Rider Haggard mentioned two old literary coincidences that had occurred in connection with his works.

One of these concerned his invention of an incident on the Tana river, where a mission station was attacked by the Masai and the mission people were killed. Strange to say, after his imaginary account had appeared, some missionaries did found a station on that river, were attacked by the Masai and some of them were killed.

In his book, "The People of the Mist," he had fixed upon an unknown part of Africa and had described a region from his inner consciousness, and only a week before the speech was made a company, in which the author is a director, had sent out orders to take possession of the very tract he had in view, and so far as the reports of the native agents who had inspected it went he believed his descriptions were fairly correct.

Henry Clay's Escape.

Fatalities resulting from "blowing out the gas" are generally considered as due to rusticity and ignorance, but the Philadelphia Record is responsible for the statement that Henry Clay was once in danger of his life from the same cause.

Mayor Swift of Philadelphia and Henry Clay were very intimate friends, and several times during the mayor's administration the eminent Kentuckian came to visit him. On one of these occasions Mr. Clay nearly lost his life.

During the first night of Mr. Clay's visit the mayor noticed an unusual odor of gas in the house, and on investigation it was found that Mr. Clay had retired without having turned off the gas.

The new illuminating agent had been lately introduced, and it is not improbable that Mr. Clay blew out the light in ignorance of the proper method of extinguishing it. Certain it is that had Mayor Swift not made his timely discovery, Mr. Clay's brilliant career would have been prematurely cut off.

THERE IS NO NATIONAL HOLIDAY.

Not Even the Labor Day Act Creates One, Say the Lawyers.

There would seem to be no such thing in this country as a national holiday. Lawyers assert that even Labor day, which was set apart by act of congress in 1894 in such manner as to lead the confiding layman to suppose it at least to be a national holiday, is not such outside of the District of Columbia unless by state enactment. The creation and regulation of holidays have been left entirely to the legislatures of the individual states.

The act of congress concerning Labor day was approved June 28, 1894. It provides "that the first Monday of September in each year, being the day celebrated and known as Labor day, is hereby made a legal holiday, to all intents and purposes, in the same manner as Christmas, Jan. 1, Feb. 22, May 30 and July 4 are now made by law public holidays."

Clearly the proper construction of this statute can be arrived at only by reference to the provisions bearing upon the other holidays named. The act making holidays of Jan. 1, July 4, Christmas and "any day appointed or recommended by the president of the United States as a day of public fast or thanksgiving" was passed in June, 1870, and was restricted in its effect to the District of Columbia. These days are holidays in the various states only as they are made so by the various state legislatures.

The act of Jan. 31, 1879, makes Feb. 22 a legal holiday, and the act of Aug. 31, 1888, does the same for May 30, and both are restricted in their application to the District of Columbia. The act referring to Labor day says nothing about the District of Columbia, but it does say that the first Monday of September shall be a legal holiday, "to all intents and purposes, in the same manner as Christmas, Jan. 1, Feb. 22, May 30 and July 4 are now made by law public holidays."

The intents and purposes for which and the manner in which those days are made holidays are expressly limited to the District of Columbia, and so, by necessary inference, is the act referring to Labor day.

The misleading language of the Labor day act has led to a prevalent statement that the first Monday of September is a holiday throughout the United States by congressional enactment.—New York Tribune.

PRANKS OF SCOTTISH FAIRIES.

A Firm Belief In the "Fair Folk" Still Lingers.

There still lingers a widespread belief in the north of Scotland that the "fair folk," or "gweed neebors," as the fairies are called, still live in the hills, and during the first days of convalescence a mother must be zealously guarded lest one of the "wee people" come and rob the child of its nourishment. Sometimes they succeed in carrying off the mother. Here is one of the superstitious legends:

A north country fisher had a fine child. One evening a beggar woman entered the hut and went up to the cradle to gaze into the eyes of the babe. From that time good health left it, and a strange look came into its face, and the mother was troubled. An old man begging for food passed that way. When he caught sight of the child, he cried:

"That's nae a bairn. It's an imago, and the gweed folk has stown his speerit."

Thereupon he set to work to recall the fisher's bairn. A peat fire was heaped high on the hearth and a black hen held over it at such a distance that it was singed and not killed. After some struggling the hen escaped up the lum. A few moments elapsed, and then the parents were gladdened by the sight of a happy expression once more on the child's face. It throve from that day forward.—Scottish Review.

A Dog Furse Snatcher.

Pointer dogs can always be trained to steal. Many of them are natural thieves without training, and any of the species can be taught. There is a dog of this kind in northwest Washington. He will pick up anything he can find around a yard or outside of a store, but his specialty is ladies' pocketbooks and handbags. When he sees one of these, he grabs it and runs, always succeeding in getting out of sight before he can be captured or followed. No owner has ever been seen, hence no complaints have been made at police headquarters, but there is but little doubt, if it were possible to follow the animal, that it would be found that he has been carefully trained as a purse snatcher and that he takes his booty home to his master. He seems to be aware that he is doing wrong, jumping fences and dodging around houses when running away.—Washington Star.

An Old Colonial Blockhouse.

Among the attractions of the town of Bourne, Mass., are two historic cellars. One was dug by the Plymouth colony and the other by the Dutch traders. These cellars lie side by side, and the structures built over them were filled with goods so necessary for the comfort of the early pilgrims as well as the Dutch. The pilgrims needed manufactured goods such as the Hollander had for sale and the Dutch required products such as the colony could supply. Governor Bradford, in his diary, states that this block house was built as early as 1627, only seven years after the landing of the Mayflower.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

What Helmholtz Did.

To appreciate his many sidedness we have but to follow the development of his life. While his first work was mainly mathematical, his second was in quite a different field. It consisted in the measurement of the velocity of propagation of sensation by the nerves. To accomplish this he must needs have been an anatomist too.

His labors in the line of psychological optics show that he was also a master of psychology.

But perhaps it is by his achievements in the remains of music that he is best known and most celebrated. In his book, "The Sensations of Tone," he solved completely the riddle of nature which had puzzled the world since the time of Pythagoras. Thus to give a rational numerical explanation of the intricacies of harmony and their effect on the ear, there was need not only of a mathematician, an anatomist, a physicist and a psychologist, but also of a musician, all united in one man. Helmholtz was all this and even more.—Scribner's.

A Stump or Trees Upon Which Appeared the Names of Many Soldiers.

"I don't quite understand, and I never could," said an observer, "what prompts people to write their names in public places. Trees have always been favorite objects upon which to carve names, and the smooth bark of the beech offers a field most inviting to the knife of the carver. I saw once a bunch of beech trees upon which thousands of names had been cut. This was in Virginia, close by the left bank of the James river. A ravine made back from the river, and at the head of this ravine there was a spring. Around the spring was this clump of beech trees.

"The names carved on these trees were those of soldiers who had been encamped thereabout in the time of the civil war and who had come to this spring for water. It was in 1879 that I saw them, so that they must have been there then at least 14 years. They had probably been there longer. About a third of the names were still legible. Many of them were the names of men of Pennsylvania regiments. Those that had become illegible were mainly those that had been carved on smaller trees.

"There was one big tree that had upon it, I should think, 500 names. They encircled it for 20 feet up from the ground. It seemed as if some of those among the highest must have been cut by men who swung down from the first branch, and one could imagine that men stood on one another's shoulders to reach above the names already carved by men standing on the ground, or that perhaps there was put up beside the tree a horse upon whose back the carver stood.

"These names may have been carved, every one of them, simply as a pastime, and yet it seemed somehow as though this was a case in which the carving might have been done in something more than a merely idle spirit."—New York Sun.

MRS. PEARY WAS FRIGHTENED.

It Was When She Went Hunting Walrus With Her Husband.

Mrs. Peary, wife of the famous arctic explorer, declares she has had more than enough of the polar regions, and is determined that her husband shall never repeat his travels in those frigid lands. When asked what experience stands out most prominently in connection with the unusual life while exploring, Mrs. Peary, without a moment's hesitation, said: "Our hunting the walrus. It is the only occasion in my life when I was so frightened that I would have welcomed death as a relief. We were out in a boat with Dr. Cook, Mat, and some natives. Mr. Peary had broken his leg, but was steering the boat, his leg, in splints, stretched out before him. We saw the walrus coming toward us, and when the natives said, 'Shoot at them,' we took our rifles and did so.

"Then followed a scene too terrible for words. The bullets had only entered the hides of these animals, enough to infuriate them, and they came forward enraged and with but one determination—to turn over the boat. They placed their long tusks on the gunwale and attempted to tip us out. I crouched at the bottom of the skiff, loading the rifles, so that the men would not have to wait a second. The sea was crimson with their blood, and for a few moments I did not know whether I should be shot by the excited men or drowned by the walruses. We killed about 17, and have some of the tusks. But don't let me talk about it any more. All that is past."—Philadelphia Times.

Bought Her Own Gown.

They tell a story of an unfortunate society woman, who, being terribly pushed for a gown to wear at a great occasion, sold seven gowns for the price of one to Mme. X. Among these gowns was one hardly rumpled, and which, though very magnificent, had evidently been worn at most only once. This dress Mme. X. sold as a model to Mme. Y., who was the society woman's dressmaker, and who had been obdurate about making another thing for the poor little woman without cash down.

When this "model" came in, she saw a chance for big return of money, so she compromised with her customer and agreed to let her have a model dress, just imported, for a very low figure. Whereat the poor woman paid all the money she had received for all her dresses, and out Mme. Y. brought the model. The poor woman talked herself blue in the face, but she could not say anything to protect herself without betraying her dealing with Mme. X., so, poor thing, she danced in her old frock after all, having swapped all her other gowns for the privilege.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

In the English army a soldier is drummed to church just as he is to drill or dress parade.